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A HISTORY

OF

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OLD POINT COMFORT

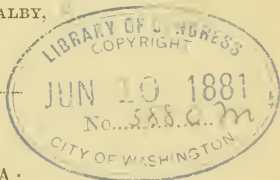
AND

FORTRESS MONROE, VA.,

FROM 1608 TO JANUARY 1ST, 1881,

WITH SKETCHES OF HAMPTON NORMAL SCHOOL, NATIONAL
SOLDIERS' HOME, AND THE HYGELA HOTEL.

3300 ✓
BY J. ARNOLD DALBY,



NORFOLK, VA:

LANDMARK STEAM BOOK AND JOB PRESSES.
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PREFACE.

I make no individual pretensions to literary excellence in this little publication, the credit of originating, which in one sense, is due to the enterprise of the Baltimore Evening Herald. I was generously aided with material for the letters, as they appeared, and had no time then, as I have no time now, for symmetrical arrangement of material. But I can claim, with a clear conscience, I think, that this little book gives the best coherent history of Old Point Comfort which has yet been offered to the public.

I have acknowledged my obligations in the body of the book for aid extended; but it will not be out of place to renew my thanks to Mr. James Barron Hope, Major-General Getty, Commodore Parks, W. J. Bodell, (Landmark correspondent, Old Point), Major Cochrane, U. S. M. C., Adjutant Chase, U. S. A., General Groner, and Mr. Phœbus, all of whom have aided me in preparing my letters.

Asking forbearance of the critics, in advance, because of acknowledged imperfections, I submit the following pages to the public with the hope that they may be received with toleration, if not kindness.

J. ARNOLD DALBY.

Norfolk, Va., May 2nd, 1881.

RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

TO

THAT SPOTLESS GENTLEMAN, SPLENDID SOLDIER, AND
HONEST PATRIOT,

MAJOR-GENERAL W. S. HANCOCK,

U. S. ARMY,

AS A SLIGHT TOKEN OF THE ESTEEM AND ADMIRATION OF

THE AUTHOR.

A HISTORY

OF

Old Point Comfort and Fortress Monroe, Va.

The following outline and sketch of the history of Old Point was comprised in a series of letters to the Baltimore Evening Herald,* and are now reproduced with a few necessary corrections. Under date of April the 10th, 1881, my contributions began as follows :

OLD POINT COMFORT, KECCOUGHTAN, NEWPORTS NEWS.

The instructions of the [Baltimore] Herald to collect material and write out a "History of Old Point Comfort" found me more willing than able to undertake the task; but, acting on the maxim that where there is a will there is a way, I have been able to collect an array of facts which I can confidently assert have never before been gathered in any one publication. I have been aided in my researches

* The Evening Herald of April the 11th, 1881, had the following editorial announcement :

"The descriptive history of Old Point, Va., the well-known Summer resort, compiled by our Norfolk correspondent, assisted by Captain James Barron Hope, 'Centennial poet,' and General Getty, the commandant at Fortress Monroe, will be read with a great deal of interest, as it has never before been chronicled. It will continue in The Evening Herald until the important features of its history have all been presented."

by access to valuable State papers and other works in the possession of a gentleman of this city, well known to the literary public, namely, Mr. James Barron Hope, to whom my thanks are hereby extended.

I am aware that for the general reader much of the historical memorandum which enters into my introduction may be uninteresting; but the facts I am about to set forth have a special value for military readers and persons of a studious turn; and without them your instructions to prepare "a history" of Point Comfort—or Old Point, as it is commonly called, could not be properly carried out.

"To begin at the beginning," the etymology of the name is as follows:

Near this place the first settlers encountered a severe storm. From the fury of this they took refuge (probably in Mill creek) under the lee of the sand beach, and finding protection there from the violence of the gale gave it the name it still bears because it "put them in good comfort."

On the 6th of June, 1610, Lord de la Warr wrote from this haven that he "met with cold comfort," alluding to the then condition of the unhappy settlers.

In later explorations New Point Comfort was found in Mathews county, and so named for the

reason controlling the nomenclature in the first instance. The New Point necessarily implied an Old Point, and hence it is that to-day we find both these names in use, and the history of these gives us in a condensed shape some idea of the hardships of the early explorers, for in a short space of time and distance they encountered two severe gales of wind and dangerous commotions of the waters.

On Smith's "Map of Virginia and the Virginian Sea," 1606, as he called the Atlantic bounding our coast, I find that he had marked the place as "Poynt Comfort." I perceive that Hampton, which has a romantic history but little known, is laid down as Keccoughtan, and that Newports' News, the deep-water terminus of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, is designated by the long-forgotten name of "Pernt Hope."

In the map attached to Miss Magill's History of Virginia, it is improperly abbreviated to Pt. Hope, which would naturally be read Point.

Pernt, I think, without any violence of presumption, may be taken to be a corruption of the Celtic pen (promontory). The original of this map is still in existence, in a good state of preservation, in the British State Paper Office, as we are told by Mr. Noel Sainsbury, who has seen and examined it in the course of his researches. It was also in the

second Charter of Virginia described as Point or Cape Comfort. So much for the name.

In the map of Fry & Jefferson, of 1775, (Fry was at one time the commanding officer of George Washington) the orthography of the Point is given as we now have it, and Pernt Hope has disappeared, and been succeeded by Newports News.

The present topographical outline of Old Point, is that of a long peninsula of sand sparsely wooded in places, and partly separated from the main land of Elizabeth City county, by a wide sheet of water known as Mill creek, over which a bridge and causeway make a road to the fortress. The juncture of the peninsula with the body of the land to the West is at a place known as Fox Hill, and there seems to have been some humor in the nomenclature, as the country thereabouts is of a flat and Holland-like monotony. But, in point of fact, what is now a peninsula was originally an island, certainly so, as much as Jamestown was, and this is shown by the petition of William Lowry, an ancient surveyor of Elizabeth City county. That gentleman in 1708 informed the Governor that in 1704 he had surveyed the tract of land called "Point Comfort Island," and for this service he claimed the "sum of 584 pounds of tobacco."

The appearance of the country up towards Back

River Light, I am told, indicates that the description given by the surveyor in 1708 was accurate, and that the "Poynt" was originally an island, crowned with well-wooded sand hills, as we gather from some of the descriptions given in the early days of the colony. It is with this place in connection with the military history of the country that I am instructed to deal, and pursuing this investigation I find that in 1608 Captain Radclyffe reported to the Earl of Salisbury that they were "raising a fortification upon Point Comfort," and to this he adds, "the wood is so thick and the labor to prepare the ground so great that the directors of [the] business ought to send a sufficient supply of victuals for one year."

In 1611 I find that a "Spanish *caravall*" (the bad Spanish is in the original) sent ashore at the fort to obtain a pilot, whereupon the boat's crew were made prisoners by the Commandant. And this brings me to an explanation of the numerous forts which were planted along all the water courses of the colony.

Before the English the Spaniards had explored the Chesapeake. This they called Madre de Aguas, which is but the Spanish translation of the Indian name, which means Mother of Waters. It was also known to them as the Bay of Santa Maria, and an old Span-

ish map includes all North America in Terra Florida. Spain insisted on her territorial rights for many years through her diplomatic agents in London and her ministers in Madrid. There were constant irritations also with France, and Argall made (1614) his cruel descent on Acadia, after which he brought some of his prisoners to Jamestown. On his return to Virginia from this barbarous expedition he sailed up the Hudson and compelled a surrender of the Dutch; and later in our history the sturdy Dutchmen returned the compliment by capturing ships in James river laden with tobacco for English ports. and, finally, in those days the seas were swarming with rovers, who had very vague ideas of the rights of property on land and water.

In further illustration of this state of affairs it may be mentioned that to the Spanish mind in 1557, and long after, Terra Florida comprehended all the territory from the Gulf of Mexico to the Arctic Ocean; and Louis XIII, of France, granted Madame de Gurcheville all the lands of North America from the St. Lawrence to Florida.

The result of these complications was, that at first the colony stood on its defense against those who might approach by sea as well as against the savages of the forest. At Keccoughtan, or Hampton,

two forts were erected soon after the settlement, and the Soldiers' Home stands on a plantation once known as "Fortfield," from the work there located more than two centuries and a half ago. The other was on "Little England," the old Barron estate, and these defenses were known as Forts Henry and Charles.

At the time of the departure of Lord de la Warr, Jamestown and Point Comfort were the chief places of the colony. In collecting these facts I have consulted the Colonial State Papers, English and American; but here I shall rely for a brief space on the acts of the Virginia Assembly as naturally fuller than the abstracts given by other authorities. And this brings me to a seeming contradiction in my narrative, for in 1629 it was decided by the Colonial Assembly of Virginia that Captain Samuel Mathews should undertake "the raysing of a ffort at Poynt Comfort," and a committee of the Assembly was appointed "to compounde and agree" with the said Captain Mathews for the building, raising and finishing the same; whereas I have stated from the record that in 1608 Captain Radclyffe had reported that they were then raising a fort. In this Assembly Elizabeth City county had six delegates, and it had been decided at a previous session that the "ffort"

should "be both a safetie and a reputation unto the colony."

And this explains the apparent discrepancy of authorities. The first "ffort" had evidently been an extemporaneous and slight affair; and the contract with Mathews was for a more solid and enduring structure than that which had given the Spaniard such an inhospitable reception in 1611.

Sir John Harvey, in May, 1629, reported to the Privy Council that he hoped by the "next Christmas" to have the fort at "Point Comfort mounted with 12 or 16 pieces of ordnance." That it was occupied at or about the time indicated appears to have been the fact, and it must have been a place of consequence, as the Secretary of the Commonwealth dated many of his communications from Point Comfort to the home government.

In 1633 the fort was put to civil uses, as in that year all incoming vessels were required to report to the Commandant in order to have "a sufficient wayter put aborde from the ffort" to remain on board her until her arrival "at the port of James Citty."

The "sinews of war" for the support of the work and garrison were derived from a levy of tobacco of "64 pounds per poll," and the pay account of the

Commandant and his forces is thus set down in an ancient statute [1633]:

	lbs. tob.	barrels.
To the Captayne of the ffort.....	2,000	and 10 corne
The Gunner.....	1,000	and 6 corne
The Drummer and Porter.....	1,000	and 6 corne
For 4 other men each of them		
500 lbs. tobacco and 4 barrels		
of corne.....	2,000	and 16 corne
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	lbs tob.	6,000 and 38 corne

Six years after this (1639), Sir Francis Wyatt then being Governor, a law, very vague in its shape, and altogether of the free-and-easy style of composition, was enacted, which appropriated “3 pounds per poll (tobacco being understood) to pay a muster master,” for “the capt. (*sic*) of the fort and ten guards,” and “two pounds to be raised next year to build a new fort at Point Comfort, and 2 pounds more to rebuild a new State house.”

The army then assembled at the fort was not quite so big as that of the Grand Duchess of Gerolstein, but they were undoubtedly very active as look-outs, and the smallness of the number is explained by considerations of economy, and the fact that they could have reinforcements almost at will from the

main land, for the military organization of the colony was of necessity always on a quasi war footing in those early days.

II.

FROM SIR WILLIAM BERKLEY TO CORNWALLIS AND DE GRASSE.

For the further support of the "ffort" any vessel that came under its guns was required to contribute a quarter of a pound of powder and the same weight of "shott" per ton; but in 1645 this was increased to half a pound of the "villainous saltpetre," and three pounds of "shot or lead" in the ratio above indicated.

But the work, though built by Captain Mathews with greater care than had been used on the first, and with the intention to make it a "safetie and reputation unto the colony," must have been poorly done, as we find a tax ordered in 1639 "to build a new fort at Point Comfort." It thus appears that this structure only lasted between eight and nine years.

In 1645 it was enacted that the Commandant should be paid out of the "quit rents by leases" due from Northampton county; but what the value of this "salary" was is not disclosed in the statutes.

When Charles the Second went to war with the Dutch some of their vessels made a swoop into James river, with which they were familiar, and captured several tobacco ships, upon which the Assembly (in 1667) reciting the above fact as the reason, resolved to build fortifications for the defense of all the rivers of the colony.

The colonial idea of military works may be gathered from the following extracts from the statute of 1657: which declares "that each ffort shall be capable of eight greate guns at the least, the walls tenn foote high, and towards the river or shipping tenn foote thick at least;" and it is fair to infer that except the difference in armament ("twelve or sixteen pieces") Poynt Comfort boasted just about such a work as is here described. One familiar with Fortress Monroe to-day, with its vast extent and heavy armament, can contrast it with the ancient work at his leisure; and in doing so one learns something of the improvement in the art of the military engineer within the past two centuries on this side of the Atlantic.

In 1679 it was decided to build forts at the heads of the great rivers, from which we see that the Indians had been at that date driven well into the interior, and as these works were abandoned soon after (1682) for others further in the wilderness,

among them Fort Pit, now Pittsburg, it is plain that the native warriors had their faces turned, once for all, towards the setting sun in search of new hunting grounds.

And now, to sum up the antiquarian part of my letter, I do not know any better authority for a general view of the fortifications of the colony than Sir William Berkley, who, in reply to the Lords Commissioners of Plantations, gave the following answer to one of their questions (1671) bearing upon the military condition of Virginia.

At that date he put the population at 40,000, of which 2,000 were "black slaves." The military establishment could muster "near eight thousand horse," and of the forts (after enumerating them) he speaks in very rugged and doubtful English, as follows: "But God knows we have neither skill nor ability to make or maintain them; for there is not, nor, as far as my inquiry can reach, ever was, one ingenier in the country, so that we are at continual charge to repair unskillful and inartificial works of that nature. There is not above thirty great and serviceable guns; this we yearly supply with powder and shot as far as our utmost abilities will permit us."

And, while on this subject, the "judicious reader" of the Herald will pardon me, I trust, if I bring be-

fore him for a moment the picture of a soldier of the colony in the days of Queen Anne. In 1705 "every soldier on horse or foot" was to be provided with "musket or ffusse, sword, cartouch box and ammunition," and the "horse, saddle, and furniture, the carbine, pistolls and sword of every trooper" were to be exempt from all seizures or tax of any kind. In 1684 a regular army, or "standing force" as it was named, was called into existence, and the men and officers thus organized were known as "Rangers." In 1738 a "breast plate" still figured in the accoutrements of the horse, while the foot were required to have a "bayonet fitted to their ffuses," or in lieu thereof a "cutting sword or cutlass," and both horse and foot were required to keep supplied with not less than "one pound of powder and four pounds of ball or shott."

But before returning from this digression to my main topic I pause to observe that the military strength of the colony as estimated by Berkley [one in five of population, and greater than that given by Montesquieu as the ratio among the ancient Romans, which was one in eight] would seem preposterous but for the fact that in 1641 it was ordered that "all persons above sixteen should bear arms," and this renders the estimate less extravagant than it seems at first.

At the same time (1641) the force at Point Comfort was still to be "maintained" at "ten guards," whereas in 1633, as we have seen, the garrison consisted of "the gunner, the drummer and porter, and four men" ready, for certain pounds of tobacco and barrels of "corne" to do battle with French, Spaniards, or Dutchmen, according to the exigencies of the times, and as the case might be.

This simple colonial establishment was greatly improved during the Revolution, but the process of loading small arms then was so slow that the famous Colonel Simcoe founded a special mode of meeting riflemen on the fact here referred to, holding that their first fire was the only effective one they could deliver when they were vigorously pressed.

But the ffort had another name; it was called St. George, after the patron saint of England, though this did not displace that given by Smith, which, indeed, continues to this day to obscure the modern and more pretentious title of Fortress Monroe.

At the end of the seventeenth, or about the beginning of the eighteenth century a prodigious tide, accompanied by a heavy gale of wind, submerged the work, and the then Commander, one of the Barron family, was compelled to abandon the place in boats.

When the foundations of the present fortress were laid the profile of the old "ffort" was discovered,

and a signet ring was found bearing the crest of the Barrons, as is set forth in the Virginia Historical Register, then edited by Mr. William Maxwell, who was a distinguished citizen of Norfolk. And although Sir William Berkley declared that they had never had an "inginier" in the colony, the fact that for nearly three centuries this spot has been looked on as one of peculiar strength and strategic value shows that the Governor himself was not altogether a good "inginier" or a competent critic; for what Barcelona was to Spain in the days of Napoleon, as is set forth by Napier, Old Point has been to Virginia, as was conspicuously shown in the late war of Secession.

The last important reference to the place in "old times" connects it with the occupation of Yorktown by Lord Cornwallis. Under date of New York, July 11th, 1781, Sir Henry Clinton wrote the Earl: "It is the Admiral's and my wish, at all events, to hold Old Point Comfort." The Admiral referred to was Graves, and on the day following he also wrote Cornwallis to urge the occupation of the place and the establishment of a battery.

On the 25th of that month Lieutenant Alexander Sunderland, of the Royal Engineers, reported that "the ground where the ruins of Fort George lay" was not worth occupying, and in support of this opinion he gave very good reasons.

On the 26th a commission of four Captains of the British Navy examined the place and ratified the report of Sunderland.

The interest of this brief narrative of that survey is increased by the fact that Lord Cornwallis personally took part in it in company "with the Captains of the British Navy on this station," and in so reporting to Clinton the Earl writes: "It is our unanimous opinion that Point Comfort will not answer the purpose."

On the 31st of August the Earl makes his last allusion to the place, and it is full of significance, as is seen at a glance. "A lieutenant of the Charon," he writes, (she was burnt afterward by the French battery on the left of the American line at York), who went with an escort of dragoons to Old Point Comfort, reports that there are between thirty and forty sail within the Capes, mostly vessels of war, and some of them very large."

On the other hand the Comte de Grasse, after a council of war, determined, among other things, that "a battery of cannon and mortars" should be erected, by aid of the allied troops, on Point Comfort."

Both designs were wise, as might easily be shown if I had the space to go into an explanation; but it matters very little, now that the warriors who fought

out that old quarrel have gone to their last muster, what reasons controlled them in dealing with that piece of ground, which, as I have shown, in a shadowy way, has had a long and romantic history, which I shall presently follow into the plain, though not uninteresting prose of its more recent annals.

Finally, and to conclude this chapter of my history, there is a fact connected with the history of Point Comfort which cannot fail to interest your Maryland readers, and, though chronologically out of place, at the end of this letter, it may, with great propriety, make its climax.

Leonard Calvert, brother of George, Lord Baltimore, (or Balamore, according to the old orthography) then dead, and brother, also, of Cecil, his successor, on his arrival in America (27th February, 1634) to represent that nobleman's interests, first landed on the historic spot of which I write. He was attended by some twenty gentlemen and two or three hundred settlers of the humbler ranks of society, and he put foot on shore with some trepidation, for his brother George, when once in Virginia, for a brief space, had been called on by Governor Pott—"Phœbus Apollo, what a name!"—to take the oaths of supremacy and allegiance, which he had refused to do.*

*The following curious fact, from the "Minutes of the Proceedings of the Governor and Council of Virginia," is, perhaps, worth quoting:

"March 25, 1630, Tho: Tindall to be pillory'd 2 hours for giving my Lord Baltimore the lye and threatening to knock him down."

But his alarm was unfounded, for though the Virginians were exasperated at the idea of a dismemberment of their territory, Harvey, the Governor, had been instructed to receive him with "courtesy and humanity," and he loyally obeyed his orders.

From Point Comfort Leonard Calvert sailed up the Bay to found the once beautiful city of St. Mary's, of which M. Schile de Vere, of the University of Virginia, speaks in his valuable and romantic chapter on the "Lost Towns of America."

It was here and thus that Calvert landed on his way to found one of the noblest of the colonies—the "Land of the Sanctuary"—which has ever flourished upon the coasts of the great Bay over whose broad waters Point Comfort, crowned by Fortress Monroe, stands sentinel.

And now, in conclusion, it may gratify you to read that an early and enthusiastic settler wrote as follows of his new home in Terra Mariæ: "Any one who desires to see the Landskip of Creation, drawn to life, should see Mary Land-Nest in her green and fragrant mantle of Spring."

In my next I shall give you some of the salient facts in the more modern history of the Point, which I think will be found interesting.

III.

THE ANCIENT HISTORY OF POINT COMFORT CONCLUDED.

I brought down the history of Old Point in my last to the erection of a battery at that place by the allied forces of De Grasse and the Continentals. Cornwallis had decided against attempting to hold the place, and Captains Hudson, Symonds, Everitt, and Dundas, of the British Navy, concurred with him in a report previously alluded to, in which this passage occurs: "We are unanimously of opinion, from the width of the channel and depth of water close to it, that any superior enemy's force coming in may pass any work that can be established there with little damage, or destroy it with the ships that may be there under its protection."

This was on July 26th, 1781. The work erected by the French was thrown up by the "superior enemy," apparently expected by the naval board. The French had command of the water, and therefore occasion to provide against all contingencies in moving from Hampton Roads or the mouth of York river into and up the James. After the war of the Revolution the Franco-American works went to decay, and Point Comfort and Buck Roe beach became a romantic solitude. *A propos* of Buck Roe the ed-

itor of one series of the Virginia State Papers (Parmer's edition) is puzzled at finding this name spelt Bricke Row in some old document, which variation from the original (Buck Roe) was evidently the result of a clerical error, and the correct name, as here given, is to be found in Wise's Seven Decades of the Union.

I must next explain to you how the place passed into possession of the United States, and this brings to mind one of the sharpest antitheses to be found in history.

In '97-'98 the French directory refused to receive Mr. Pinckney as our minister. Verbal and diplomatic affronts were supplemented by acts of direct hostility, and the allies of 1781 were at war upon the high seas in 1798.

During this conflict, which was popularly called the "Little French War," to distinguish it, I presume, from the struggle in which Braddock met his great disaster, the cannon of the two powers were turned against each other, and the frigate *Insurgente* was captured by the famous *Truxtun*, whose grandson, also a Captain of reputation in our Navy, is a highly respected citizen of Norfolk.

The Congress of '89 took vigorous measures of defense, empowered the President to call into the field 80,000 men, and conferred upon the immortal

Washington the rank of Lieutenant-General to organize our defenses. In a few years this was the changed aspect of affairs, and the change was such that Washington, in a letter to Hamilton, called the conduct of France "outrageous."

As a part of the defensive measures contemplated at that time an armament on Old Point was spoken of, and naturally so, as what there was of the "war"—outside the war of words—was maritime in its nature, and a French fleet might have fallen upon us had hostilities continued. But as the necessity vanished the place continued in its neglected and unfortified condition.

But the spot did not lose its warlike character, for it became the Phœnix Park, the Chalk Farm, the Wimbledon Common, and the Bois de Boulogne of that region, and I am told by old residents of Hampton that duels were frequently fought there by gentlemen of the surrounding country, some five of which I am informed are within the memory of inhabitants of this region. The last, in which both principals went down badly wounded, was fought in April, 1850, and I think is briefly recorded in Sabine's work on duelling.

After the commotion of 1798 Old Point Comfort sank into a fishing ground, and the dunes went back very nearly to the condition described in 1609, when

the woods were thick and the vines in picturesque abundance.

In the war of 1812 Cockburn repeated the predatory and iniquitous warfare, which Sir Henry Clinton had waged during the Revolution, and the dismay spread by his ravages was intensified by Ross' vandalism at Washington, after the "Bladensburg races."

It was while Cockburn was ravaging the coast, apparently under the old theory which was agreed on by Clinton and Cornwallis, that the battle of Hampton took place, in which the Virginia troops were handled with about as much skill as you might expect from a campaign managed by a young ladies' seminary. But there were many acts of heroism performed, and the father of Mr. Fay Jones, of Norfolk, was especially distinguished.

Then it was, with the embers of Hampton and Washington still smoking, that Sir William Berkeley's views were finally rejected, and the Republic, whose capital had been partly destroyed by the invaders, determined to establish a great fortress, and a place of arms at Point Comfort.

But the United States Government was slow in its movements, so that it was not till March the first, 1821, that the Point and opposite shoal (Rip Raps) were conveyed to the Republic, though in March,

1819, ground was actually broken for the great fortress which now dominates the waters of Hampton Roads.

And just here I may remark that New Point Comfort, before referred to as explaining how the adjective became part of the name Old Point, was conveyed to the United States 15th of January, 1802.

Also it may not be out of place to say that the land on which the lighthouse at Fort Monroe now stands was granted to the Government as far back as January 2d, 1791, so that the present military reservation was acquired in two separate concessions from the State of Virginia.

During the times of which I have chiefly spoken the appearance of the place was wild and romantic, as one can see in his "mind's eye," when aided by the sketch given by "Captayne" Radcliffe (1609), who found the ground so tangled and difficult that he estimated it to be necessary to have workmen supplied "with victuals for one year" as a necessary precaution in preparing for the "raysing" of a "ffort;" and from the nature of the growth on the beach and hills, principally of live oak and pines, intermixed with various shrubs and vines, among the latter the fragrant jassamine, one can readily understand that the ground was originally very difficult for the primitive "inginiers" of the colony.

Among numerous modern sketches of the physical aspects and condition of the place, as it now stands, there is none so compact, so full, or so satisfactory as that contained in a report from the office of the Surgeon-General of the Army (1870), from which I make the following extracts:

“The peninsula, on the extremity of which the Fort is erected, is surrounded almost by water. The exceptions to this is a strip of beach some 400 yards wide, which runs to the north and looks eastward. Over this strip of beach, during heavy easterly storms, the sea washes, rendering at such times the peninsula an island. On the east, northeast and southeast are the waters of the Chesapeake Bay; on the south and southwest are those of Hampton Roads, and on the north and northeast are those of Mill Creek. * * The geological formation of the peninsula, upon which the Fort is built, is of ocean sand resting upon marl-impregnated clay. Boring to the depth of 850 feet within the enclosure of the Fort has shown nothing but sand lying upon marl-impregnated clay, with here and there small veins of sharp bluish sand admirably adapted for polishing and grinding metals. The country on the mainland is flat, and there are no hills within a radius of eight or ten miles. * * * The soil inside the Fort is artificial, and has been brought from the

mainland. * * * On the Chesapeake Bay beach to the north are heavy sand hills, and on these are found numerous live oaks as well as the Southern pine."

Having finished what may be called the "ancient history" of Point Comfort, in which task, by no means a light one, some thirty authorities had to be consulted, many of which are exceedingly rare and valuable, I began to think of accumulating material for the modern story of this famous place.

Provided with a letter of introduction from Captain Cockrane, Commandant of the Marine battalion stationed at the Norfolk Navy Yard (really the Gosport or Portsmouth Navy Yard), I took the steamer for Old Point, and on arriving at the garrison, presented my letter to Adjutant Chase, who introduced me to Major-General George W. Getty, U. S. A., who very graciously acceded to my request to be supplied with materials by placing in my hands a document which embodies all the essential facts which you wish to know, and I hereby return my thanks to General Getty, and the other gentlemen named for their courtesy and kindness.

With this introduction, I present the readers of the Evening Herald with the following interesting and valuable paper, of which but one other copy is in existence (on file in the War Department), and

which has never before been given to the public, so that from first to last the Baltimore Evening Herald may fairly claim to have monopolized and exhausted the historical field of Old Point Comfort and Fortress Monroe, and this brings me to what may properly be called the general history of the Point.

IV.

MODERN HISTORY OF POINT COMFORT.

For the facts immediately following, the writer is indebted, as already set forth, to the courtesy of Major-General Getty, U. S. A. They are from the official memorandum belonging to the garrison, and I have only used such parts in this publication as promise to interest the general reader.

“Fort Monroe, Virginia, is in latitude 37 deg. 0 min. 02 sec., longitude 76 deg. 18 min. 06 sec. west from Greenwich, and is the principal fortification for the defense of Hampton Roads, near the mouth of Chesapeake Bay, James River, and Norfolk.”

“It was projected, with others, to cove the interior navigation between Chesapeake Bay and the Southern States, to secure the roadstead, and a point, serving as the connecting link between the middle and southern coasts as a naval place of arms, whence that arm of the public service may operate in de-

fense of commerce and the public establishments at Norfolk, and such as were contemplated on James river; also to prevent an enemy from making a lodgment in the direction of Norfolk.”

“These objects have been minutely set forth in the reports of various boards of military and naval officers, created from time to time since the close of hostilities with Great Britain in the early part of 1815—experiences during which having drawn the serious attention of the Government to the subject of sea-coast defenses, and the most important of these reports are consequently cited.”

“November 16, 1816, the acting Secretary of War, George Graham, directed the immediate formation of a “board of engineer officers” to consist of Brigadier-General Simon Bernard, Colonel William McRea and Lieutenant-Colonel J. G. Totten, together with an officer of the Navy, and the engineer officer in charge of the district in which the board might be acting, to examine in conjunction all these positions where important permanent works are or may be proposed to be erected, etc., etc. [Instructions from Chief of Engineers.”]

“January 18, 1817, the Secretary of the Navy transmitted to the Senate opinions of Naval Board, for the selection of site for naval depot and defensive works on Chesapeake Bay.”

“Senate resolutions of February 13, 1817, and April 20, 1818, directed the President to cause the survey of * * * Hampton Roads and York river by commissioners, who shall report on the practicability of defending the same by fortifications, &c., &c.,” and the following from the records of the engineer department are the instructions under which the work was finally executed:

The instructions, which I condense, issued from the U. S. Engineer Department, May 1st, 1818, and were addressed to Brigadier-Generals Swift and Bernard, and Colonels Armistead and McRea, who were to co-operate with Captains Warrington and Elliott of the Navy, for the purpose of examining the waters of Hampton Roads and York River. They were specially instructed “to report how far it [might] be practicable to defend Chesapeake Bay by erecting towers and other defenses in the channel between the Horse Shoe and the Middle Ground.” Major Kearney, topographical engineer, was detailed for duty with the Board.

By “instructions of the Secretary of War,” the Chief Engineer continued as follows:

“In forming plans and estimates of the works of defense, I am instructed by the Secretary of War to assume a given force as the amount of which an enemy would use in operating against any position

that may be fortified on or near Chesapeake Bay. I therefore recommend to the commissioners to make their calculations upon the supposition that an enemy can land an army of twenty thousand men to operate against the works on land, and that they can aid such an army with 15 seventy-fours, 20 frigates, and 30 bomb vessels, to cover the landing and to operate against the marine batteries which may be adjacent to or connected with the land defense."

Under date of June 10, 1818, the Secretary issued another order defining still further the duties of the Board, from which we quote the following paragraph:

"The Board will proceed with as much dispatch as is consistent with a thorough discharge of its duties, and when the survey is completed, or the season will not permit it to be continued, it will repair to this place to complete its reports and estimates."

I now resume the official narrative as follows:

* * * * *

The report of this Board is voluminous, and embraces the inception of the present system of sea-coast defense of the United States. It was made in 1819 and 1820, and revised in 1826.

The principal reports of our officers on the subject of sea-coast defense are contained in H. R. Report

No. 87, 39th Congress, second session, and too elaborate to quote herein at length.

It is said to be a tradition of the Engineer Department that Fort Monroe was planned by Gen. Simon Bernard, of the United States Engineers, formerly an officer under Napoleon I. in the Imperial Army of France. The drawings were made by Captain W. T. Ponssin, of the Topographical Engineers, acting Aid to General Bernard; and it is noteworthy that in a report by a board of officers on the subject of military defenses, May 10, 1840, an apology is made for its magnitude.

Material having been accumulated at Old Point Comfort, Va., during the Fall and Winter of 1818, the construction of the fort was actually commenced in March, 1819, under Major Charles Gratiot, Corps of Engineers; and from 1822 until February, 1824, all able-bodied soldiers serving on the Atlantic coast who were sentenced by courts-martial to hard labor for periods exceeding six months were employed on this work.

It was named Fort Monroe in honor of James Monroe, who was the President of the United States when its construction was commenced. The first appropriation bill in which this fort is specifically mentioned is in that of March, 1821, previous to

which date appropriations were made in general without designating particular works.

The post was first occupied by Battery G, 3d United States Artillery—June, 1823—Captain M. P. Lomax commanding. In February, 1824, its garrison was increased by Batteries C, D and I 4th Artillery, Captain B. K. Pierse, 4th Artillery, assuming command. About this time the Artillery School, then known as the "Artillery School of Practice," was established and is now in existence, known as the United States Artillery School. The School has, however, been discontinued at various times when the public services demanded the services of the troops elsewhere. During the civil war of 1862-'5 the post was garrisoned by one regiment of heavy artillery, 1,800 men. General Sherman's expedition to South Carolina sailed from this point October 28, 1861. General Burnside's expedition to North Carolina also sailed in January, 1861. General Butler's expedition to Hatteras Inlet in August, 1861, and to Fort Fisher in December, 1864; also General Terry's in January, 1863, were fitted out at Fort Monroe.

The post was used as a base of supplies for the Army and Navy operating on the line of James river and along the coast of North and South Carolina during the entire period of the war.

Major-General B. F. Butler commanded the military department of which Fort Monroe was the headquarters from May 22d, 1861, to August 17th, 1861. He was succeeded by Major-General John E. Wool, who was followed June 2d, 1862, by Major-General John H. Dix, who commanded until July 18th, 1863; then followed Major-General John G. Foster to November 11th, 1863; Major-General B. F. Butler to December 24th, 1864, and Major-General E. O. C. Ord to April, 1865. The post then became the headquarters of the Fifth Regiment of Artillery until November 13th, 1867, when the Artillery School was again established. [See G. O. No. 99 of 1867, from A. G. O.]

V.

The area of the site of Fort Monroe, 252 acres, including two acres previously ceded, was ceded to the United States by the State of Virginia, March 1st, 1821, and conveyed to the former by deed from the Governor of Virginia, recorded in the County Court of Elizabeth City county, December 12th, 1828.

The records of Elizabeth City county were destroyed by fire at the burning of Hampton during the war of 1861-'5. The title of the United States

to lands at Fort Monroe was affirmed by the Court of Appeals of Virginia, in the case of French vs. Bankhead, in May, 1854, settling the rights of the United States in her favor fully upon every point made, to wit:

[The details here are purely technical, and are, therefore, omitted.]

Mill Creek Bridge, connecting Old Point Comfort with the main land, was deeded to the United States by the Hampton River and Mill Creek Toll Bridge Company, November 15, 1838.

Jurisdiction over the toll bridge and abutments thereof across Mill creek in the county of Elizabeth City, was ceded to the United States by deed of the Governor of Virginia, executed April 8, 1871.

About fifteen acres of land on the right bank of Mill creek opposite Fort Monroe, were conveyed to the United States by A. J. Bradford, February 12, 1841.

A lot containing two acres, situated at the intersection of Hampton and Fox Hill roads, was purchased for the United States by Colonel Rene E. De Russy from John Tabb, in May, 1844; consideration, \$80.85. This lot was intended for a cemetery, but the United States failing to confirm the purchase, it reverted to the estate of Colonel De Russy, he having personally paid the consideration named. In the

settlement of the De Russy estate this lot was re-conveyed to Tabb, of Hampton, Va.

[Private persons occupy places on the reservation, and the chief of these in extent of ground occupied, and value of property, is Mr. Phœbus of the hotel. This is spoken of in the official memorandum as follows, metes and bounds omitted :]

Hygeia Hotel was authorized by a joint resolution of Congress, approved June 25, 1868, to Henry Clark. Additional ground and the construction of additional buildings was authorized to said Clark by the Secretary of War, January 20, 1872, and articles of agreement were signed by Clark, Colonel W. F. Barry and Major W. P. Craighill respectively, for each grant. Clark sold to S. M. Shoemaker, of Baltimore, Md., and by virtue of joint resolution of Congress, approved February 19, 1875, Shoemaker was authorized by the Secretary of War to enlarge the building. In the last case articles of agreement were signed by Hon. W. W. Belknap, Secretary of War, and Shoemaker, date December 28, 1875.

Joseph Segar and C. C. Willard, in consideration of losses sustained by them by the destruction of the old Hygeia Hotel in 1862, which building stood upon the glaces of the fort, and had been conjointly owned by them since June 15, 1857, were authorized by the Secretary of War November 16, 1871, 23d of

January, 1872, and February 5, 1872, to rebuild their hotel and to occupy a site situated on the Mill Creek road and north of the fort. Neither of whom, however, availed themselves of the opportunity.

There is a Roman Catholic Chapel, authorized by Lieutenant-Colonel R. E. DeRussy, approved by the Secretary of War. Article of agreement signed June 8, 1860, by Right Rev. John McGill, Bishop of Richmond. The Chapel stands on the road leading from main sally-port, and privilege includes a residence for clergyman; also, small school, both subsequently authorized.

Mr. William A. Kimberly has a store-house authorized by law, James A. Watkins, Esq., has an attractive place near the Hotel, and conducts the business of grocer and ship-chandler. Mr. William Balch is post-trader, and Adams Express Company has an office (telegraph.)

VI.

THE OLD HYGEIA, ANECDOTES, AND A GROUP OF FACTS.

Among the objects of local interest outside the Fort, the Hygeia Hotel is conspicuous, and in amplification of the memorandum already made on this subject I add the following:

The Hygeia Hotel was built in 1821, by a brother

of the late General Armistead, United States Army, who was at that time post-sutler. The lumber for the building was procured from Tunis & Parks, at that time carrying on a West Indian business, and owners of an extensive lumber-yard at Norfolk. The original "Hygeia" was situated near the entrance of the Fort, and consisted of one large room, used both as parlor and dining-room, with four chambers on either side, and kitchen in outbuilding in the rear, as in olden time.

The post-sutler having become dissatisfied, with the consent of the Department the hotel was turned over to Messrs. Tunis & Parks, and Mr. Tunis having disposed of his interest, Mr. Marshall Parks became sole proprietor, and gave the hotel its present name, and made extensive improvements. The salubrity of the climate attracted visitors from abroad, and just after the "Black Hawk War," that celebrated personage, together with other distinguished Indian chiefs, became prisoners of war at Fortress Monroe.

When it was known that Black Hawk was to arrive at Norfolk on his way to the Fortress, the wharves were crowded to witness his landing from the Richmond steamer. At that early period the steamboat from Richmond did not make landings at Old Point, but came from the James through the

Swash channel direct to the old borough. Mr. Parks being then sole owner of the *Hygeia* and the several steamboats to Old Point, dispatched one of his steamers to the mouth of the James and intercepted the Richmond steamer, taking off the Indians and their guard, landing them at Fortress Monroe, thus disappointing the people of Norfolk who had gathered on the wharves to see them debark. The Indians at Old Point attracted great crowds, and the profits of the *Hygeia* were very much increased. The hotel was greatly enlarged and made capable of accommodating four hundred guests.

Old Point, as a watering place, was now attracting people from every section. The English, French, and Spanish war vessels would rendezvous in Hampton Roads each year to escape the hurricane months of the West Indies, and their stay would be a season of joyous hilarity for the young people. Balls and parties were the order of the day; and it was nothing unusual for several bands of music, representing different nationalities, to be stationed in the ball-room at one time. The *Hygeia*, in those days, was brilliantly illuminated, and the music by the Fort band was considered the best in the country.

After the death of Mr. Parks, in 1840, the hotel became the property of different persons, who subsequently sold to James H. French, who greatly

enlarged and improved it. The ball-room was said to be one of the best in the United States, and the hotel presented an elegant appearance.

An anecdote connected with Black Hawk, which I believe has never been printed, is worth preserving, and shows that the famous chief understood how to hold an advantage when gained quite as well as any civilized warrior among the pale-faces. To vary the monotony of his captivity, he played at draughts and became quite celebrated at the game. At last a gentleman was produced who possessed considerable skill, as was explained to the chief, after which they sat down to play, Black Hawk attended by an interpreter. The result was in favor of the captive warrior, thereupon his antagonist arranged the men and indicated that Black Hawk should move, but the chief sat as still as if cast in bronze, and paid no attention to the nods and signs of the defeated player.

Whereupon the latter called on the interpreter to explain that he wished the chief to open the game. After an exchange of a few words in their own tongue, the interpreter turned to the expectant "pale face" and gave Black Hawk's reply in this sententious fashion: "He say no. He say he got you beat; he keep you beat;" with which reply the chief arose from the table and stalked away, no doubt pleased within himself at his victory over the man who had

been reported to him as specially skilled in the game of which he himself was a master.

The "Rip-Raps" once had a "disloyal" name, that of Castle Calhoun, which was changed to Fort Wool, not to any advantage, but it is never described by either of these names, unless when the latter may be used in official descriptions. In Howe's History of Virginia the following remarkable and erroneous piece of etymology appears, which may be worth correcting :

"The shoal water which, under the action of the sea, and reacted on by the bar, is kept in unremitting ripple has given the name of Rip-Raps to the place."

The truth is that the debris, the rubbish, the rip-rap discarded from the work on the main land was "dumped" on the shoal where this grim and solitary work now rises from the water, with the addition of an s, the name (Rip-Raps) was given to it by usage, which, as is always the case, has proved for popular effect more powerful than official nomenclature.

About the year 1879 the Engineer Department organized a board to test the relative resistance of various materials to modern projectiles. For this purpose immense targets of wood, iron, stone, concrete, &c., were erected on the beach to represent sections of imaginary fortifications, and a large number of distinguished officers of engineers, artillery and

ordnance, were present to witness the experiments and study the results. A 12-inch rifled gun was used, and also a 10-inch and a 15-inch columbiad. The rifle carried a conical steel projectile of 60 pounds, while a solid shot of 450 pounds was used for a 15-inch gun. The result of the practice may be summed up in two or three words. Two or three shots reduced each target to a total wreck, but a great sand-bank which received many of the projectiles seemed to smile with positive serenity, and absolutely to defy the battering force of the great pieces. The armament of the fort includes many such guns as have been referred to, but, with parsimonious appropriations and the great improvement in modern ordnance, it has not been thought wise to go further in mounting cannon which must soon be superceded in coast defenses, which may at some day (who knows when?) have to contend with the heavily-armored ships of some European power.

It is the intention of the Government to take its three 10-inch columbiads and gradually convert them into 8-inch rifled guns, thereby increasing their efficiency both in powers of flight and penetration. About three months ago eight of these guns were shipped to West Point foundry, Cold Spring, N. Y., to undergo this transformation, and others will be sent as soon as funds become available. *A propos* of the change,

an amusing dialogue occurred between the Ordnance Sergeant, who was placing guns on the wharf to be shipped, and the Post Chaplain. The latter came along and casually asked the sergeant what he was doing with the guns.

The sergeant replied, "Oh, we are sending them North to be converted."

To which the chaplain remarked: "I am afraid they will find them hard subjects."

With the "converted" guns mounted, the Rip-Raps armed, the iron-clad fleet (now at City Point) equipped and in the Roads, and with a torpedo station at Norfolk, Point Comfort will be able to give a very good account of itself in resisting the approach of a hostile fleet.

While in this vein of scattered recollections I must not forget to tell you that rather a singular scene was presented when the case of *French vs. Bankhead* was decided in the Circuit Court of Elizabeth City county. The Judge was the celebrated John B. Clopton, a man of great learning and many remarkable qualities, whose memory is still warmly cherished by the people of this part of Virginia. The case was argued before him by some of the most learned lawyers of the country, and for ten or fifteen days the old courthouse in Hampton (burnt by Magruder) resounded to their eloquence. I am told that they had a cart-

load of authorities, and that all the black-letter law in the books, relative to riparian rights, was paraded for the edification of the court. When the argument was over, Judge Clopton thanked the counsel for their display of learning, and then decided the matter in a couple of minutes by reading an old statute of Virginia, which forbade any one to patent the lands from and after a certain date. This overthrew the French case, horse, foot and dragoons, and, I am told, all the famous lawyers in the case had overlooked, had forgotten, or were ignorant of the Act of Assembly which the Judge had quoted in deciding for the defendant.

But my letter has already been too much protracted, and I wind it up by assuring you and your readers that my next will contain a chapter of unwritten history, which will be worthy of attention.

VII.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

In what I call the modern history of Point Comfort and Fortress Monroe I included the documentary evidence of certain striking and carefully authenticated facts, all chronologically arranged, and in so doing kept in reserve a number of curious and interesting things gathered from other sources.

Among other things I gathered in prosecuting my inquiries was the fact that General V. D. Groner, of this city, had been intimately connected with a scheme to take possession of Fortress Monroe when, in 1861, it became apparent that a war was to take place between the sections. This gentleman was afterwards a Colonel in Mahone's famous brigade, Army Northern Virginia, and is now agent of the Boston Steamship Company in this city. With this sketch of General Groner's previous career, I go at once to our interview.

When I explained to him the object of my visit, and displayed my credentials, he expressed a reluctance to discuss the matter; but when I urged it upon him as of public importance, showing him that the facts belonged to the domain of history, he promised to take the matter under consideration. Unwilling to take this as a refusal, and animated by the desire to give this unwritten history to the public, I called upon him again, and the following is the substance, very accurately stated, of our interview:

In reply to my direct question if he would not give me the facts of this interesting matter, he said:

"Yes, I can give you most of them; but it is now over twenty years since the time and events of which you speak, and I cannot pretend to be accurate as to days and dates, or as to the forces then at Old Point,

and I must speak with some reserve, though not with reserve in any essential particular. I shall omit nothing which is in the line of your inquiry, but I shall not go beyond that into details which might involve any person living or dead, further than to name one or two prominent men of Virginia, who cannot object to what I have to say, or whose friends, as is the case with General Wise, now dead, could find any fault with my reminiscences; but I will merely show you how easily it would have been for the State of Virginia to have possessed herself of that important fortification which would strategically have been the key to the Chesapeake Bay, and controlled the Gosport Navy Yard with its large number of ships and immense munitions of war—saving the Confederacy thousands of men, who afterwards occupied Norfolk and the Peninsula, and enabled them to have concentrated their entire force in Virginia opposite Washington, and have made the battle of Manassas a Waterloo to the Union forces.

“During the canvass for the Presidency in 1860, I was on the Rio Grande; my purpose was to colonize, or rather Americanize through a secret organization, of which I was military secretary, certain States in Mexico, and ultimately ask annexation to the United States, thereby giving a political equilibrium which the South was rapidly losing by the growing settle-

ments of Northwestern Territories. The excitement of the Presidential election prevented us being joined by a sufficient force, and the election resulting in the success of Mr. Lincoln caused us to feel that the attempt was then useless. Returning east as rapidly as the slow conveyances at the time through Texas would permit, I went to Jackson, Mississippi, and was sent North by Governor Petus, of that State, stopping at Norfolk, Va. I visited my old friend, Governor Henry A. Wise, who then lived but a few miles from this city. We had several talks upon the situation of the country, but being directed by telegraph to proceed to New York, nothing was done; but upon my return from New York in January, 1861, I was sent for by Governor Henry A. Wise, who said, we must possess ourselves of Fort Monroe, and I must do it, he said, whether the State of Virginia seceded or not, and he was for fighting for our Constitutional rights in the Union. We (the States, he meant) must be in position to control terms, and that Virginia should not be coerced into damaging terms by the constant menace which such a Fort, occupying a part of her soil, would give the Federal Government. Having always been an enthusiastic admirer of Wise, and having been requested by him whilst he was Governor, to go to Harper's Ferry, and afterwards to Charlestown, and

remain until after the execution of John Brown, I rapidly fell into his views. Having quite a large number of our organization in the old town of Hampton, some three miles from the Fort, I proceeded to that point and made it my headquarters, initiating a number of the enlisted men of the garrison who we could best trust, among whom were three of the orderly sergeants. Our plans becoming better matured these sergeants, who were to arrange to have proper men on guard at certain points, including Mill Creek bridge and a certain gate, declined to act further unless the demand for the surrender was made by the authority of the State of Virginia, and a free passport guaranteed to them to pass through the State with protection during the same. I then had recourse to Governor Wise, who advised me to at once proceed to Richmond, and through General Richardson, who had served as Adjutant-General of this State for very many years, and who was my personal friend, to lay the situation before Governor Letcher, fortified with a letter from Governor Wise to General Richardson urging his assistance and committing himself fully to the enterprise. I visited Richmond, and after explaining the situation, he thoroughly coincided with the views of Wise and myself, and promised his active support in convincing the Governor of its immediate necessity,

•

he himself going with me across the hall to Governor Letcher's room.

“In consultation with the Governor at the time was Secretary of State Munford, and some two or three other gentlemen, whom I was advised I could trust—one, I think, was Mr. Neeson, a lawyer of Richmond. General Richardson had some consultation with the Governor, and then stated that I had come with a most important proposition that he fully concurred in. Governor Letcher then asked me to state fully my proposition and all the facts connected therewith. After doing so he hesitated a few moments, and then replied, he was the Governor of Virginia, but not placed there to make laws, but only to execute them. The Legislature was then in session, and if I had any plans write them out and he would submit them to the Legislature. My reply at once was, ‘Governor, you know a number of the members are open and avowed Abolitionists, and if this was submitted to that body the authorities in Washington would know of it within the hour it was so submitted.’ He then said this was the only thing he could do, and I at once returned to Norfolk. In other interviews with our friends in the Fort, I found they were fixed in their declaration not to act except upon the condition named; and receiving a telegram shortly from Governor Petus, I proceeded to Mississippi. I was sent

from there to Montgomery and appointed First Lieutenant in the regular Confederate Army and assigned to duty much in advance of General Cooper's arrival as Assistant Adjutant-General, and by direction of L. P. Walker, then Secretary of War of the Confederacy, had transmitted to General Beauregard by telegraph 'to open fire upon Fort Sumter.' You can readily see how easy the capture of Fort Monroe would have been, with at least one-fourth of the enlisted men in our sworn organization, and with over 300 men from Hampton and Norfolk, who would not have hesitated at a much more hazardous enterprise under the fierce excitement of those days.

"Secretary of State Munford some time ago wrote me, requesting me to give my understanding of the interview, for publication in the Southern Historical Society, and I looked up at the time old memoranda of the occurrence; but it was so soon after the war that I thought it best not to do so at that time. In my conversation with you, hurriedly as it is, I may have fallen into some errors, but if Mr. Munford is now alive, or the other gentlemen, they will concur with me in the substance of my interview with Governor Letcher, and there are many now alive who know all of what I have said, although very few were "fully admitted to the secret."

The above interview with General Groner has

given you and your readers a piece of unwritten history which brings to mind on a vast scale the suggestions contained in Hawthorne's story of what might have been, and one could pursue the theme through many pages without exhausting the topic. Old Point Comfort has elsewhere been compared to Barcelona. Its relations to Virginia are those which that place hold to Spain, and more especially during the war were they what the relations of Barcelona were to the Iberian peninsula from 1808 to 1814. The conception of its capture was a wise one in a military point of view, and on this point all well-informed people will agree without touching the opinions they may hold in regard to the rights and merits of our unhappy war. But it is not my function to elaborate these reflections, and I lay down my pen with the conviction that I have been the means of contributing to our history a curious little chapter, which, under other circumstances, might have been "big with the fate of Cato and of Rome."

VIII.

Although I have finished the history of Old Point Comfort, Fortress Monroe, and the incidents connected therewith, yet I feel that it would be a grand mistake on my part to close my communications to

the Herald from this important point without begging your readers to go with me to three places hereabouts, around which cluster scenes of more than ordinary interest to both reader and student.

• Keccoughtan, or Hampton, is a place of great antiquity, and deserves a history of its own, which some day may be written. But to speak of the ancient town of Hampton without a word or two of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad would be to ignore a great and living fact, which is destined to exercise a prodigious influence on the "Peninsula of Virginia," as the tongue of land between the York and James is called, though the State has many others. The Eastern terminus of this great line is at Newports News, as I have said elsewhere, and the work is going forward with energy and dispatch, so that the tourist who wishes to understand something of the rapid development of Virginia's resources cannot do better than to take a look at this historic spot. The road, splendidly equipped and thoroughly appointed, will probably be ready for services by the 1st of September, and its enormously valuable property at Newports News will be provided with merchandise docks, coal docks, and grain elevators on a grand scale. Hampton Roads, to which the great Commodore Maury looked forward as the future commercial centre of the Atlantic coast, will soon

show signs of verifying his prediction, and fleets of ships for coal, and grain, and meat will assemble at the company's wharves long before another Summer brings its guests to Old Point Comfort. There is no extravagance in this, for while the line is building up at this end it is pushed forward with equal energy in the West, from Huntington to Cincinnati, Louisville, Memphis, St. Louis, and Chicago; and alike rich in resources and powerful in connections it will become a benefaction to this part of the country, and such is the feeling of the people of the Peninsula.

The Hygeia (of which mention has been briefly made in these sketches) was before the war a celebrated watering-place, but it was not until years after peace that the place arose from its ashes and reasserted its rightful position. Its old clientage was scattered, a new generation had arisen, and only knew of it traditionally as a place to which pleasure-seekers used to resort in ante-bellum days. But under the excellent management of its present proprietor it has more than regained its former prestige, and to-day stands prominently among the best resorts known in the country. But let us visit the place ourselves, by supposing ourselves to have started from Baltimore or Washington on board the palatial steamers which ply between those cities and Old Point. It is a lovely June morning (suppose you). We step from the

stateroom and we catch a whiff of the delightful morning air, while before us unruffled as a Summer lake the tranquil Chesapeake stretches before us. To our left and parallel with our steamer's course lies the self-same shore which greeted Newport's weary eyes nearly three centuries ago; to the left also the light-house at Cape Charles shows like a pillar beneath the rising sun. Soon we reach the Hygeia; our room fronts upon the Bay, and through the open window we look upon its animated surface, and from afar the music tells us "what the wild waves say."

Bent on seeing all the scenes of interest, we start for a drive to the National Soldiers' Home, over which Captain P. T. Woodfin presides as governor. This place is a mammoth building, and was before the war used as a seminary for young ladies, but the Government having purchased it, has made great additions, and to-day it is regarded as one of the finest structures of the kind in the entire country. Its grounds are large and handsomely laid off and filled with rare flowers and shrubbery. They have a small theatre for public entertainments, which, I am pleased to say, is often occupied by professional players.

The total number of disabled soldiers and sailors

cared for at the Home during the year ending June 30th, 1880, was 1,106, from the following States :

California.....	5	New Mexico.....	2
Connecticut.....	23	New York	302
Delaware	16	New Jersey.....	83
District of Columbia...	66	New Hampshire	12
Illinois	23	Ohio	20
Indiana.....	15	Oregon.....	1
Iowa	4	Pennsylvania.....	266
Kansas	8	Rhode Island.....	15
Kentucky.....	19	Tennessee.....	1
Louisiana.....	12	Texas.....	1
Maine.....	11	Vermont.....	8
Maryland.....	63	Virginia	27
Massachusetts.....	40	West Virginia.....	9
Michigan.....	10	Wisconsin.....	11
Minnesota.....	2	Washington Ter.....	1
Missouri.....	30		
Total.....			1106

The men are well provided for and seem to be satisfied with the provisions made for their support. The Home is a place of much interest, and all the tourists visiting here are sure to go there also.

From this place they next take in the Hampton Normal School, which is presided over by General S. C. Armstrong. This gentleman is a native of the Sandwich Islands, and has a brother there, who, at this writing, is the Attorney-General of that Government.

The institution is supported by contributions,

mostly made by Northern people, while the State of Virginia contributes, through her Legislature, \$10,000 annually to its support. It was opened in April, 1868, with fifteen pupils, one teacher and a matron, but up to this time fourteen hundred and twenty-nine have been admitted (1,429), most of whom are colored boys and girls. The principal's last report (October, 1880,) gives that year's enrollment as follows :

“Colored men, 181; colored women, 105; Indian boys, 47; Indian girls, 24. Total, 354. Average age of young women, $18\frac{1}{2}$ years; average age of young men, 20 years. There has been a gain of 32 colored students over last year. There are less day scholars but more boarders.”

Three years ago seventeen Indians, ex-prisoners of war, out of a party of sixty-five captured warriors, who, after three years of confinement at St. Augustine, Florida, had been released by the Government, were enrolled as pupils at this school. In a few months afterwards eleven out of the seventeen professed religion, and this is regarded as a great change, for against each of these eleven young Indians there were charges of plunder and murder on file in the War Department. Some time during every year some one of the chiefs whose children are in this school pays it a visit. Last session the Ponca chief, White

Eagle, and Little-no-Heart visited the school and were highly pleased. So you can understand that it has been fully demonstrated that not only the negro but the red brother is being benefitted by these normal schools; and when the Indian is once educated that is to a great extent the end of Indian wars. The braves will not fight the people who are educating their children. Every Indian child at the white man's school is a hostage. Had the son of Dull Knife, the Cheyenne chief, who a few years ago, with his 300 warriors, made one of the most brilliant raids of history through Kansas, been at school, Dull Knife would never have gone on that raid. There are a number of buildings attached to this place, and each is used for some particular branch of industry, where the boys and girls of the school are taught to work, learning some kind of trade in order that they may become useful. The grounds are most beautifully laid off, and when taken all in all, the place is one of much interest to tourists generally. When one starts from Point Comfort to visit the above place he generally consumes the entire day in sight-seeing, although the School and Soldiers' Home are but three miles distant. The ride, however, together with the healthful sea-breeze, sharpens his appetite for the supper which Phœbus, of the Hygeia, knows so well how to prepare.

THE FIRST CONFEDERATE RAM.

History of the Merrimac Under the Confederate Flag.

The following narrative of the services of the Merrimac was contributed to the Southern Magazine by Catesby Ap-R. Jones, her Executive and Ordnance Officer and Commander, in her fight with the Monitor :

When, on April 21, 1861, the Virginians took possession of the abandoned Navy Yard at Norfolk, they found that the Merrimac had been burned and sunk. She was raised; and on June 23d following, Mr. S. R. Mallory, Confederate Secretary of the Navy, ordered that she should be converted into an iron-clad, on the plan proposed by Lieutenant John M. Brooke, C. S. Navy. The hull was 273 feet long. About 160 feet of the central portion was covered by a roof of wood and iron, inclining about 36 degrees. The wood was two feet thick. It consisted of oak plank 4 inches by 12 inches, laid up and down next the iron, and two courses of pine—one

longitudinal of eight inches thickness, the other twelve inches thick. The intervening space on top was closed by permanent gratings of two inch square iron two and one-half inches apart, leaving openings for four hatches, one near each end, and one forward and one abaft the smokestack. The roof did not project beyond the hull. There was no knuckle as in the Atlantic, Tennessee and our other iron-clads of latter and improved construction. The ends of the shield were rounded. The armor was four inches thick. It was fastened to its wooden backing by one and three-eighths inch bolts, countersunk and secured by iron nuts and washers. The plates were eight inches wide. Those first made were one inch thick, which was as thick as we could then punch cold iron. We succeeded soon in punching two inches, and the remaining plates, more than two-thirds, were two inches thick. They were rolled and punched at the Tredegar Works, Richmond. The outside course was up and down, the next longitudinal. Joints were broken where there were more than two courses. The hull, extending two feet below the roof, was plated with one inch iron; it was intended that it should have had three inches. The prow was of cast iron, wedge-shape, and weighed 1,500 pounds. It was about two feet under water, and projected two feet from the stem; it was well

fastened. The rudder and propeller were unprotected. The battery consisted of ten guns, four single-banded Brooke rifles, and six nine-inch Dahlgreen's shell guns. Two of the rifles, bow and stern pivots, were seven-inch, of 14,500 pounds; the other two of 9,000 pounds, one on each broadside. The nine-inch gun on each side nearest the furnaces was fitted for firing hot shot. A few nine-inch shot with extra windage were cast for hot shot. No other solid shot were on board during the fight. The engines were the same the vessel had whilst in the United States Navy. They were radically defective; and had been condemned by the United States Government. Some changes had been made, notwithstanding which the engineers reported that they were unreliable. They performed very well during the fight, but afterwards failed several times, once whilst under fire.

THE PREPARATIONS.

There were many vexatious delays attending the fitting and equipment of the ship. Most of them arose from the want of skilled labor and lack of proper tools and appliances. Transporting the iron from Richmond also caused much delay; the railroads were taxed to supply the army. The crew, 320 in number, were obtained with great difficulty. With few exceptions, they were volunteers from the

army; most of them were landsmen. Their deficiencies were, as much as possible, overcome by the zeal and intelligence of the officers; a list of them is appended. In the fight one of the nine-inch guns was manned by a detachment of the Norfolk United Artillery. The vessel was by the Confederates called *Virginia*. She was put in commission during the last week of February, but continued crowded with mechanics until the eve of the fight. She was badly ventilated, very uncomfortable and very unhealthy. There was an average of fifty or sixty at the hospital in addition to the sick list on board. The flag officer, Franklin Buchanan, was detained in Richmond in charge of an important bureau, from which he was only relieved a few days before the fight. There was no captain; the ship was commissioned and equipped by the executive and ordnance officer, who had reported for duty in November. He had, by special order, selected her battery, and was also made responsible for its efficiency. A trial was determined upon, although the vessel was in an incomplete condition. The lower part of the shield forward was only immersed a few inches, instead of two feet as was intended, and there was but one inch of iron on the hull. The port-shutters, &c., were unfinished. The *Virginia* was unseaworthy; her engines were unreliable, and her draft, over twenty-two feet, pre-

vented her from going to Washington. Her field of operation was therefore restricted to the Bay and its immediate vicinity. There was no regular concerted movement with the Army.

THE ATTACK ON THE CUMBERLAND.

The frigates Congress and Cumberland temptingly invited an attack. It was fixed for Thursday night, March 6, 1862; the pilots, of whom there were five, having been previously consulted. The sides were slushed, supposing that it would increase the tendency of the projectiles to glance. All preparations were made, including lights at obstructions. After dark the pilots declared that they could not pilot the ship during the night. They had a high sense of their responsibility. In justice to them it should be stated that it was not easy to pilot a vessel of our great draft under favorable circumstances, and that the difficulties were much increased by the absence of lights, buoys, &c., to which they had been accustomed. The attack was postponed to Saturday, March 8. The weather was favorable. We left the Navy-yard at 11 A. M., against the last half-flood of the tide, steamed down the river past our batteries, through the obstructions, across Hampton Roads, to the mouth of James river, where off Newports News lay at anchor the frigates Cumberland and

Congress, protected by strong batteries and gun-boats. The action commenced about 3 P. M., by our firing the bow gun at the Cumberland, less than a mile distant. A powerful fire was immediately concentrated upon us from all the batteries afloat and ashore. The frigates Minnesota, Roanoke and St. Lawrence, with other vessels, were seen coming from Old Point. We fired at the Congress on passing, but continued to head directly for the Cumberland, which vessel we had determined to run into, and in less than fifteen minutes from the firing of the first gun we rammed her just forward of the starboard fore-chains. There were heavy spars about her bows, probably to ward off torpedoes, through which we had to break before reaching the side of the ship. The noise of the crashing timbers was distinctly heard above the din of battle. There was no sign of the hole above water. It must have been large, as the ship soon commenced to careen. The shock to us on striking was slight. We immediately backed the engines. The blow was not repeated. We here lost the prow, and had the stem slightly twisted. The Cumberland fought her guns gallantly as long as they were above water. She went down bravely, with her colors flying. One of her shells struck the sills of the bow-port and exploded; the fragments killed two and wounded a number. Our

after nine-inch gun was loaded and ready for firing, when its muzzle was struck by a shell, which broke it off and fired the gun. Another gun also had its muzzle shot off; it was broken so short that at each subsequent discharge its port was set on fire. The damage to the armor was slight. Their fire appeared to be aimed at our ports. Had it been concentrated at our water-line we would have been seriously hurt, if not sunk. Owing to the ebb tide and our great draft, we could not close with the Congress without first going up the stream and then turning, which was a tedious operation, besides subjecting us twice to the full fire of the batteries, some of which we silenced.

THE ATTACK ON THE CONGRESS.

We were accompanied from the Yard by the tugs Beaufort, Lieutenant-Commander W. H. Parker, and Raleigh, Lieutenant-Commander Wm. Alexander. As soon as the firing was heard up James river, the Patrick Henry, Commander John R. Tucker; Jamestown, Lieutenant-Commander J. N. Barney, and the tug Teaser, Lieutenant-Commander W. A. Webb, under command of Captain John R. Tucker, stood down the river, joining us about 4 o'clock. All these vessels were gallantly fought and handled, and rendered valuable and effective service. The prisoners from the Congress stated that

when on board that ship it was seen that we were standing up the river that three cheers were given under the impression that we had quit the fight. They were soon undeceived. When they saw us heading down the stream, fearing the fate of the Cumberland, they slipped their cables, made sail, and ran ashore bows on. We took a position off her quarter, about two cables' length distant, and opened a deliberate fire. Very few of her guns bore on us, and they were soon disabled. The other batteries continued to play on us, as did the Minnesota, then aground about one and one-half miles off. The St. Lawrence also opened on us shortly after. There was great havoc on board the Congress. She was several times on fire. Her gallant Commander, Lieutenant Joseph B. Smith, was struck in the breast by the fragment of a shell and instantly killed. The carnage was frightful. Nothing remained but to strike their colors, which they did. They hoisted the white flag, half-masted, at the main and at the spanker gaff. The Beaufort and Raleigh were ordered to burn her. They went alongside and received several of her officers, and some twenty of her men as prisoners. The officers urgently asked permission to assist their wounded out of the ship. It was granted. They did not return. A sharp fire of musketry from the shore killed some of the prison-

ers and forced the tugs to leave. A boat was sent from the Virginia to burn her, covered by the Teaser. A fire was opened on them from the shore and also from the Congress, with both of her white flags flying, wounding Lieutenant Minor and others. We replied to this outrage upon the usages of civilized warfare by reopening on the Congress with hot shot and incendiary shell. Her crew escaped by boats, as did that of the Cumberland. Canister and grape would have prevented it, but in neither case was any attempt made to stop them, though it has been otherwise stated, possibly from our firing on the shore or at the Congress.

We remained near the Congress to prevent her recapture. Had she been retaken it might have been said that the flag-officer permitted it, knowing that his brother was an officer of that vessel.

THE CONGRESS BURNED.

The Patrick Henry received a shot from the shore in one of her boilers, and had to be towed out of the fight. She, however, soon returned, and was again hotly engaged. A distant and unsatisfactory fire was at times had at the Minnesota. The gunboats also engaged her. We fired canister and grape occasionally in reply to musketry from the shore, which had become annoying. About this time the flag-officer was badly wounded by a rifle ball, and

had to be carried below. His bold, daring and intrepid conduct won the admiration of all on board. The Executive and Ordnance Officer, Lieutenant Catesby Ap-R. Jones, succeeded to the command. The action continued until dusk, when we were forced to seek an anchorage. The Congress was riddled and on fire. A transport steamer was blown up. A schooner was sunk, and another captured. We had to leave without making a second attack on the Minnesota, though we fired at her as we passed on the other side of the middle ground, and also at the St. Lawrence. The latter frigate fired at us by broadsides—not a bad plan for small calibres against iron-clads, if concentrated. It was too dark to aim well. We anchored off our batteries at Sewell's Point. The squadron followed. The Congress continued to burn. "She illuminated the heavens, and varied the scene by the firing of her own guns, the flight of her balls through the air," until shortly after midnight, "when her magazine exploded, and a column of burning matter appeared high in the air, to be followed by the stillness of death." (Extract from report of General Mansfield, U. S. A.) One of the pilots chanced about 11 P. M. to be looking in the direction of the Congress, when there passed a strange-looking craft, brought out in bold relief by the brilliant light of the burning ship, which he

at once proclaimed to be the Ericsson. We were, therefore, not surprised in the morning to see the Monitor at anchor near the Minnesota. The latter ship was still aground. Some delay occurred from sending our wounded out of the ship; we had but one serviceable boat left. Admiral Buchanan was landed at Sewell's Point.

THE MONITOR APPEARS.

At 8 A. M. we got underway, as did the Patrick Henry, Jamestown and Teaser. We stood towards the Minnesota and opened fire on her. The pilots were to have placed us half mile from her, but we were not at any time nearer than a mile. The Monitor commenced firing when about a third of a mile distant. We soon approached and were often within a ship's length; once while passing we fired a broadside at her only a few yards distant. She and her turret appeared to be under perfect control. Her light draft enabled her to move about us at pleasure. She once took position for a short time where we could not bring a gun to bear on her. Another of her movements caused us great anxiety; she made for our rudder and propeller, both of which could have been easily disabled. We could only see her guns when they were discharged; immediately afterward the turret revolved rapidly, and the guns were not again seen until they were again fired. We

wondered how proper aim could be taken in the very short time the guns were in sight. The Virginia, however, was a large target, and generally so near that the Monitor's shots did not often miss. It did not appear to us that our shells had any effect upon the Monitor. We had no solid shot. Musketry was fired at the look-out holes. In spite of all the cares of our pilots, we ran ashore, where we remained over fifteen minutes. The Patrick Henry and Jamestown, with great risk to themselves, started to our assistance. The Monitor and Minnesota were in full play on us. A small rifle-gun on board the Minnesota, or on the steamer alongside of her, was fired with remarkable precision. When we saw that our fire made no impression on the Monitor, we determined to run into her if possible. We found it a very difficult feat to do. Our great length and draft in a comparatively narrow channel, with but little water to spare, made us sluggish in our movement, and hard to steer and turn. When the opportunity presented, all steam was put on; there was not, however, sufficient time to gather full headway without striking. The blow was given with the broad wooden stem, the iron prow having been lost the day before. The Monitor received the blow in such a manner as to weaken its effect, and the damage to her trifling. Shortly after an alarming leak in

the bows was reported. It, however, did not long continue.

Whilst contending with the Monitor we received the fire of the Minnesota, which we never failed to return whenever our guns could be brought to bear. We set her on fire and did her serious injury, though much less than we supposed. Generally the distance was too great for effective firing. We exploded the boiler of a steamer alongside of her.

END OF THE FIGHT.

The fight had continued over three hours. To us the Monitor appeared unharmed. We were, therefore, surprised to see her run off into shoal water, where our great draft would not permit us to follow, and where our shell could not reach her. The loss of her prow and anchor, and consumption of coal, water, &c., had lightened us so that the lower part of the forward end of the shield was awash. We for some time awaited the return of the Monitor to the Roads. After consultation it was decided that we should proceed to the Navy-yard, in order that the vessel should be brought down in the water and completed. The pilots said that if we did not then leave that we could not pass the bar until noon of the next day. We, therefore, at 12 M., quit the Roads and stood for Norfolk. Had there been any sign of the Monitor's willingness to renew the con-

test, we would have remained to fight her. We left her in the shoal water to which she had withdrawn, and which she did not leave until after we had crossed the bar on our way to Norfolk. The official report says: "Our loss is two killed and nineteen wounded. The stem is twisted and the ship leaks; we have lost the prow, starboard anchor, and all the boats; and the armor is somewhat damaged, the steam-pipe and smoke-stack both riddled, and the muzzles of two of the guns shot away. It was not easy to keep a flag flying; the flag-staffs were repeatedly shot away; the colors were hoisted to the smoke-stack, and several times cut down from it." None were killed or wounded in the fight with the Monitor. The only damage she did was to the armor. She fired forty-one shots. We were able to receive most of them obliquely. The effect of the shot striking obliquely on the shield was to break all the iron, and sometimes to displace several feet of the outside course; the wooden backing would not be broken through. When a shot struck directly at right angles, the wood would also be broken through, but not displaced. Generally the shot were much scattered; in three instances two or more struck the same place, in each case causing more of the iron to be displaced and the wood to bulge inside. A few struck near the water-line. The

shield was never pierced, though it was evident that two shots striking in the same place would have made a large hole through armor, wooden backing and everything. The ship was docked; a prow of steel and wrought iron put on, and a course of two-inch iron on the hull below the roof extending in length 180 feet. Want of time and material prevented its completion. The damage to the armor was repaired; wrought-iron port-shutters were fitted, &c. The rifle guns were supplied with bolts of wrought or chilled iron. The ship was brought a foot deeper in the water, making her draft twenty-three feet.

CHALLENGES NOT ACCEPTED.

Commodore Josiah Tatnall relieved Admiral Buchanan in command. On the 11th of April he took the Virginia down to Hampton Roads, expecting to have a desperate encounter with the Monitor. Greatly to our surprise, the Monitor refused to fight us. She closely hugged the shore under the guns of the Fort, with her steam up. Hoping to provoke her to come out, the Jamestown* was sent in and captured several prizes, but the Monitor would not budge. It was proposed to take the vessel to York

*French and English men-of-war were present. The latter cheered our gun-boat as she passed with the prizes.

river; but it was decided in Richmond that she should remain near Norfolk for its protection. Commodore Tatnall commanded the Virginia forty-five days, of which time there were only thirteen days that she was not in dock or in the hands of the Navy-yard. Yet he succeeded in impressing the enemy that we were ready for active service. It was evident that the enemy very much overrated* our power and efficiency. The South also had the same exaggerated idea of the vessel. On the 8th of May a squadron, including the Monitor, bombarded our battery at Sewell's Point. We immediately left the Yard for the Roads. As we drew near the Monitor and her consorts ceased bombarding and retreated under the guns of the forts, keeping beyond the range of our guns. Men-of-war from below the forts, and vessels expressly fitted for running us down, joined the other vessels between the forts. It looked as if the fleet was about to make a fierce onslaught upon us. But we were again to be disappointed. The Monitor and other vessels did not venture to meet us, although we advance until the projectiles from the Rip-Raps fell more than a half a mile beyond us. Our object, however, was accomplished; we had put an end to the bombardment, and we returned to our buoy.

*Some of the Northern papers estimated her to be equivalent to any Army Corps.

THE VIRGINIA DESTROYED.

Norfolk was evacuated on the 10th of May, 1862. In order that the ship might be carried up the James river we commenced to lighten her, but ceased on the pilots saying they could not take her up. Her shield was then out of water; we were not in fighting condition. We, therefore, ran her ashore in the bight of Craney Island, landed the crew and set the vessel on fire. The magazine exploded about 4:30 on the morning of the 11th of May, 1862. The crew arrived at Drury's Bluff the next day, and assisted in defeating the Monitor, Galena, and other vessels on the 15th of May. Commodore Tatnall was tried by court-martial for destroying the Virginia, and was honorably acquitted of all the charges. The Court stated the facts and their motives for acquitting him. Some of them are as follows: "That after the evacuation of Norfolk, Westover, on James river, became the most suitable position for her to occupy; that while in the act of lightening her, for the purpose of taking her up to that point, the pilots for the first time declared their inability to take her up. * * That when lightened she was made vulnerable to the attacks of the enemy. * * * The only alternative, in the opinion of the Court was to abandon and burn the ship

then and there, which, in the judgment of the Court, was deliberately and wisely done.

OFFICERS OF THE VIRGINIA.

Flag Officer, Franklin Buchanan; Lieutenants—Catesby Ap-R. Jones, Executive and Ordnance Officer; Charles C. Simms, R. D. Minor (flag), Hunter Davidson, J. Taylor Wood, J. R. Eggleston, Walter Butt; Midshipmen—Foute, Marmaduke, Littlepage, Craig, Long and Rootes; Paymaster, James Semple; Surgeon, Dinwiddie Phillips; Assistant Surgeon, Algernon S. Garnett; Captain of Marines, Reuben Thom; Engineers, H. A. Ramsay, Acting Chief; Assistants, Tynan, Campbell, Herring, Jack, and White; Boatswain, Hasker; Gunner, Oliver; Carpenter, Lindsey; Clerk, Arthur Sinclair, Jr.; Volunteer Aid, Lieutenant Douglas Forest, C.S.A.; Captain Kevil, commanding detachment of Norfolk United Artillery; Signal Corps, Sergeant Tabb.



Where to Go and What to See.

FOR the information of tourists and others who may visit Old Point Comfort, we append the following as being places worthy of a visit, viz :

1st. One will find a visit to the National Soldiers' Home both pleasant and agreeable. This institution is presided over by Captain P. T. Woodfin as Governor. It is a Home for disabled soldiers, and is supported by the Government.

2d. The Hampton Normal School is a place of rare interest. The School is presided over by General S. C. Armstrong as principal, and is supported by general contributions and \$10,000 annually from the State of Virginia.

3d Is the National Cemetery. This place is about thirty minutes ride from the Point, and contains the remains of a large number of Union soldiers who died during the war.

4th Is the ancient town of Hampton, where can be seen the old St. John's Church, built in 1654, and said to be the oldest church in Virginia.

5th Is the Fort itself, with its many matters of interest. One must personally inspect this place in order to learn more about it than has been given in the preceding pages.

Travelers' Guide, Or Which Way Shall I Travel.

TO those into whose hands this little book from time to time may fall, and especially to those who are bent on travel, either for pleasure or business, we beg to commend the routes, (be they either by land or sea) of the different lines whose advertisements constitute an important part of this work. Tourists who patronize them are assured of safety, dispatch and comfort, besides each and all of the lines above referred to pass through a section of country surpassingly grand. The days and hours of departure, as named in the advertisements, are correct in every particular, and travelers can rely upon the information here given.

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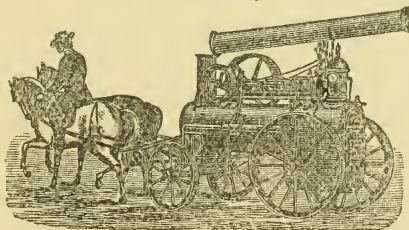
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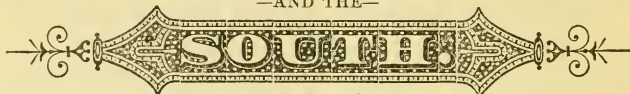
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Leave New York, via Pennsylvania R.R.	-	-	-	-	-	3:40 P. M.
“ Philadelphia via Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore R.R.	-	-	-	-	-	5:30 P. M.
“ Baltimore from Canton Wharf on arrival of New York train	-	-	-	-	-	8:45 P. M.
Steamers leave Union Dock for Canton Wharf	-	-	-	-	-	7:00 P. M.

NOTE.—The **1 P. M. TRAIN FROM NEW YORK** connects also with the Bay Line Steamers at Baltimore.

GOING NORTH.

Leave Portsmouth and Norfolk,	-	-	-	-	-	-	5:30 P. M.
“ Old Point Comfort,	-	-	-	-	-	-	7:00 P. M.
Arrive Baltimore,	-	-	-	-	-	-	7:30 P. M.
“ Philadelphia,	-	-	-	-	-	-	11:00 A. M.
“ New York,	-	-	-	-	-	-	1:00 P. M.

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TRAINS WILL RUN AS FOLLOWS:

LEAVE PORTSMOUTH DAILY, EXCEPT
SUNDAYS,

Mail Train at.....9:15 A. M.
Accommodation Train at.....2:00 P. M.

ARRIVE IN PORTSMOUTH DAILY, EXCEPT
SUNDAYS,

Mail Train at.....5:15 P. M.
Accommodation Train.....11:20 P. M.

Mail Train connects at Weldon with the Mail Trains of the Wilmington & Weldon, and Raleigh and Gaston Railroads.

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
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